

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2136

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 143

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

COMPHIBRON SIX

COM THREE FOUR MAU

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 8164

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION OCTOBER 27

REF: BEIRUT 8155 (DTG 261425Z OCT 76)

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT SARKIS RETURNING TO LEBANON AMID
HARSH LEFTIST CRITICISM OF HIS ROLE AT ARAB SUMMIT AND
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INDICATIONS FROM CHAMOUN THAT HE DOES NOT INTEND COOPERATE

WITH AL DETERRENT FORCE. RIGHTISTS CLAIM PALESTINIANS ARE FORTIFYING MOUNTAIN POSITIONS AND WE UNDERSTAND SYRIANS PLAN BEGIN PUSH ON ALEY SOON IF PALESTINIANS DO NOT MOVE OUT VOLUNTARILY. SYRIAN/CHRISTIAN DIFFERENCES LIKELY OVER POSITION OF VANGUARDS AND CHRISTIAN/ISRAELI COOPERATION IN THE SOUTH. GROUND SITUATION STATIC BUT SOUTH LEBANON SITUATION SUBJECT OF STRONG PROTESTS FROM MUSLIMS AND LEFTISTS. CEASE-FIRE HOLDING WELL IN BEIRUT. END SUMMARY.

2. SARKIS RETURNING AMID CRITICISM. PRESIDENT SARKIS DUE LEAVE CAIRO FOR RETURN LEBANON OCT 27 IN FACT LEFTISTS CRITICISM OF HIS ACTIVITIES. PRO-IRAQI MAGAZINE BEIRUT CALLS SARKIS "A SYRIAN PUPPET" FOR HIS DEFENSE BEFORE THE ARAB SUMMIT OF SYRIAN POSITION IN LEBANON WHEN "ALL ARAB REGIMES, INCLUDING THE REACTIONARIES, OPPOSE SYRIAN MILITARY ACTION." JUNBLATT REPROACHES SARKIS FOR "NOT HAVING TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF ARAB DIFFERENCES TO OBTAIN DEPARTURE OF SYRIAN TROOPS" AND LAMBASTS KARAMI ACCEPTANCE OF PLACEMENT OF PROJECTED 30,000 ARAB LEAGUE TROOPS UNDER SOLE COMMAND OF SARKIS AS "ABDICATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES." DISPUTE SARKIS' STATEMENTS AT CAIRO SUMMIT, CHAMOUN NOW SAYS PUBLICLY FOR FIRST TIME HE FIRMLY OPPOSES ENTRY OF AL FORCES TO AREAS UNDER RIGHTIST CONTROL. NLP LEADER REFUSED TO SAY WHETHER HE HAD EXAMINED QUESTION WITH HIS LEBANESE FRONT ALLIES. AL MOHARRIR REPORTS SARKIS PLANNING PROMOTE COL. AHMAD AL-HAJJ TO JENERAL AND APPOINT HIM COMMANDER OF ARAB LEAGUE DETERRENT FORCES.

3. PLO AFTER CAIRO. PALESTINIANS APPEAR UPSET OVER LARGE PERCENTAGE SYRIAN COMPOSITION OF AL FORCE, BUT AN NAHAR QUOTES PALESTINIAN SOURCES THAT PLO HAS ABANDONED PROPOSAL PLA PARTICIPATE IN AL FORCE DUE OBJECTIONS FROM LEBANESE RIGHT. RIGHTISTS MIGHT HAVE BEEN PREPARED DEMAND CHRISTIAN MILITIA UNITS BE INCLUDED IN AL FORCE AS "LEBANESE CONTINGENT" IF PLA ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE. BEIRUT PRESS ALSO NOTES FAILURE OF ARAFAT TO OBTAIN EVEN TOKEN EGYPTIAN OR KUWAITI PARTICIPATION IN AL FORCE.

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4. SYRIANS AND CHRISTIANS TALK WAR. AL MOHARRIR QUOTES CHAMOUN THAT FIVE-DAY PERIOD SPECIFIED IN RIYADH ACCORD FOR PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST WITHDRAWAL FROM MOUNTAINS AND SOUTH NOW EXPIRED AND "UNTIL NOW NO PART OF AGREEMENT HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED." STATEMENT SEEN AS IMPLIED THREAT OF RIGHTIST MILITARY ACTION. BECHIR GEMAYEL CLAIMS PALESTINIANS IN MOUNTAINS, INSTEAD OF RETREATING, ARE FORTIFYING POSITIONS. WE UNDERSTAND SYRIANS HAVE TOLD

CHRISTIANS THEY INTEND BEGIN PUSH PALESTINIANS OUT OF
ALEY SOON IF PALESTINIANS DO NOT VOLUNTARILY MOVE.

5. SYRIAN/CHRISTIAN DIFFERENCES; SYRIAN GESTURE TO PLO.
EVIDENCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SYRIANS AND LEBANESE
RIGHTISTS INCREASES, PARTICULARLY IN MATN. WE UNDERSTAND
SYRIAN EFFORT PULL OUT OF SOME MATN VILLAGES OCT 24
BROUGHT FLOOD OF CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN TO AREA. IN
EFFORT KEEP UP IMAGE OF UNITY, BECHIR GEMAYEL SAID
OCT 26 SYRIAN TROOP MOVEMENTS IN MATN ARE SIMPLE
ROTATION OF UNITS. ON OTHER HAND, AL MOHARRIR CLAIMS
JUNBLATT PROTESTING SYRIAN PLAN TO VACATE PREDOMINANTLY
DRUZE VILLAGES OF RAS EL-METN, ARSUN, SALIMA, QARNAYIL
AND JUWAR AL-JUZ AND ALLOW RIGHTISTS TO MOVE IN.
LEBANESE ARMY COMMANDING OFFICERS FROM ZAHLE AND
DEIR EL-AHMAR MET OCT 26 WITH CHAMOUN AND GENERAL HANNA
SAID TO DISCUSS CONTINUED VANGUARD OCCUPATION OF THEIR
BARRACKS AND SYRIAN DEMAND THAT LEBANESE UNITS JOIN
VANGUARDS OR GIVE UP ARMS. CHAMOUN SAID HE INTENDS
TAKE MATTER UP WITH SARKIS. IN THE SOUTH, WE
UNDERSTAND SYRIANS INCREASINGLY DISTRESSED OVER MORE
AND MORE BLATANT COOPERATION BETWEEN LEBANESE RIGHTISTS
AND ISRAELIS AND HAVE PRIVATELY TAKEN RIGHTISTS TO
TASK. AL ANWAR CLAIMS PRESIDENT ASAD ASSURED YASSIR
ARAFAT DURING OCT 24 VISIT TO DAMASCUS THAT
PALESTINIAN/SYRIAN COMMITTEES WOULD BE CREATED TO
REOPEN SUPPLY LINES TO PALESTINIANS IN ARKOUB "TO
GUARANTEE FREEDOM OF ACTION OF PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE
AND PREVENT SABOTAGE OF CAIRO ACCORDS AND ISRAELI
PENETRATION INTO SOUTH LEBANON."

6. IN THE SOUTH. GROUND SITUATION NOW LARGELY
STATIC, ALTHOUGH AS SAFIR REPORTS CONTINUED ISRAELI
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AND RIGHTIST PRESSURES ON LOCAL POPULATION AND MOVEMENTS
OF POPULATION FROM THREE VILLAGES. ACTION MAINLY ON
POLITICAL FRONT WHERE MUSLIMS AND LEFTISTS AND OTHERS
SEEK DRAW ATTENTION TO RIGHTISTS' FAIT ACCOMPLI. NM
MET UNDER LEADERSHIP JUNBLATT OCT 26 AND SAID IT HAD
TAKEN DECISION CARRY OUT URGENT MOBILIZATION "OF ALL
NATIONAL POTENTIAL" TO FACE ISRAELI/ISOLATIONIST
COALITION IN SOUTH. DEPUTY FROM SOUTH ABDEL-LATIF
ZEIN AFFIRMS THAT "A NUMBER OF YOUNG MEN "FROM THE
REGION HAVE RECEIVED MILITARY TRAINING IN ISRAEL.
PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ISLAMIC FRONT SHEIKH ABD AL-HAMID
HUR REPORTS DIRECT ISRAELI THREATS AGAINST MUSLIM
BORDER VILLAGE LEADERS AND SAYS "WHAT IS HAPPENING
IN SOUTH LEBANON IS A PLOT WHICH THREATENS NOT ONLY
LEBANESE PEOPLE BUT THE ENTIRE ARAB NATION" AND CALLS

FOR STATIONING OF AL STRIKE FORCE IN SOUTH. SHIITE ISLAMIC ASSEMBLY OF TYRE SENDS MESSAGE TO ARAB SUMMIT CALLING ATTENTION TO "THE TRAGIC SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON WHERE A BARBARIAN OFFENSIVE IS LAUNCHED BY THE ZIONIST ENEMY UNDER ISOLATIONIST PROTECTION." GREEK ORTHODOX BISHOP OF MARJAYUN REPORTS RIGHTIST PRESSURES ON GREEK ORTHODOX IN SOUTH LEBANON AND CONDEMNS ALL WHO ACCEPT POLITICAL AND MILITARY AID FROM ISRAEL.

7. GROUND SITUATION ELSEWHERE. CEASE-FIRE CONTINUED ALMOST UNBROKEN IN BEIRUT AND SUBURBS UNTIL LATE OCT 26 WHEN FIREFIGHTS AND SOME SHELLING BEGAN IN PORT AREA AND ALONG CENTER CITY CONFRONTATION LINE. LEFTIST RADIO LEBANON SAYS OPENING OF BEIRUT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT WILL BE POSSIBLE NOVEMBER 5 WHEN DETACHMENTS OF AL TROOPS ARE IN PLACE. RADIO SAYS VARIOUS MILITANT GROUPS HAVE EXPRESSED TO AL COMMANDER MOUBARAK THEIR WILLINGNESS PULL BACK TO ALLOW AL ESTABLISH BUFFER ZONES AND REOPEN AIRPORT. CEASE-FIRE ALSO HOLDING IN MOUNTAINS AND IN NORTH LEBANON. TENSIONS CONTINUE BETWEEN CHRISTIANS OF ZGHORTA AND BECHARRE. BOTH AN NAHAR AND AL MOHARRIR REPORT DIRECT FIRE ASSAULT BY BEKAA "POPULAR RESISTANCE FRONT" AGAINST SYRIAN POSITIONS AT BAALBEK NIGHT OF OCT 25-26 AND SUBSEQUENT SYRIAN WAVE OF ARRESTS. WE HAVE NO CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIRMATION. IN WEST BEIRUT, POPULATION HAS RETURNED TO MORE NORMAL LIVING PATTERNS FOLLOWING LAST WEEK'S HEAVY BOMBARDMENTS.
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